

REMARKS**Summary of the Office Action**

The drawings stand objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) as allegedly not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lai (U.S. Patent No. 5,176,523) (hereinafter "Lai").

Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lai and Wakatshuki (U.S. Patent No. 4,986,618) (hereinafter "Wakatshuki").

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended claims 1-3 to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application's specification. Accordingly, claims 1-3 remain currently pending for consideration.

Drawing Objections

The drawings stand objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) as allegedly not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. The Examiner then alleges that the "first and second recording unit relative to the main body" must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim.

Applicants respectfully traverse this objection to the drawings for at least the following reasons. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims do not currently recite "first and second recording unit relative to the main body" as alleged in the Office Action.

To the extent that the Examiner may have intended to refer to the claimed “first recording medium receiving unit” and “second recording medium receiving unit,” these features are clearly shown in the drawings in their current form.

In this regard, Applicants respectfully submit that Fig. 1(b) of the instant application illustrates a slot 2. This slot 2 is described in paragraph [0037] of the instant application’s specification, for example, as “a slot 2 through which a recording medium such as an optical disc can be loaded or unloaded into or from the reproducing unit, respectively.” Thus, the “first recording medium receiving unit” is shown in the drawings as slot 2, for example, which clearly receives a recording medium.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that Fig. 1(b) of the instant application illustrates a recording medium receiving unit 11. This receiving unit 11 is described as a recording medium receiving unit in paragraph [0037] of the instant application’s specification. Thus, the “second recording medium receiving unit” is shown in the drawings as recording medium receiving unit 11, for example.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested for at least the foregoing reasons. To the extent that the Examiner might maintain this objection to the drawings, the Examiner is respectfully requested to specifically explain his rationale for asserting that these features are not shown in the drawings as described by the foregoing explanation.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a)

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lai. Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lai and Wakatshuki.

Applicants have amended claims 1-3 to differently describe embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application's specification. To the extent that these rejections might be deemed to apply to the claims as newly-amended, they are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 has been newly-amended to describe an electronic equipment combination of feature that includes four essential components, namely a main body, a first recording medium receiving unit, a front panel, and a second recording medium receiving unit. More specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the newly-amended independent claim 1 describes a front panel, in addition to the main body and the first and second recording medium receiving units as being provided in combination with each other, as specifically described in the claim. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments to independent claim 1 are fully supported, for example, with regard to the first to fifth embodiments of the disclosure of the instant application at paragraphs 0036-0094 of the specification of the instant application. The combination described in newly-amended independent claim 1 differs from the applied references for at least the following reasons.

Lai discloses a stackable memory card connector. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Lai does not disclose, or even suggest, the features described in newly-amended independent claim 1, for example, with regard to the specific combined structure of the main body, the first recording medium receiving unit, the front panel, and the second recording medium receiving unit. For example, Lai does not disclose, or even suggest, to any extent about an interrelationship between a first recording medium receiving unit, a front panel, and a second recording medium receiving unit.

As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of features specifically described in newly-amended independent claim 1 of the instant application clearly has novelty in light of the disclosure of Lai.

Even further, Applicants respectfully submit that the first embodiment of the disclosure of the instant application, for example, provides specific effects described in the specification at paragraphs 0056 to 0058. Applicants respectfully submit that the structure described in Lai cannot provide such effects. As a result, Applicants believe that the subject matter described in newly-amended independent claim 1 of the instant application is patentable over Lai.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully asserts that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) should be withdrawn because Lai does not teach, or even suggest, each feature of independent claim 1, as newly-amended. As pointed out in MPEP § 2131, "[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim." Thus, "[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. Of California, 2 USPQ 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)." Similarly, MPEP § 2143.03 instructs that "[t]o establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. In re Royka, 409 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974)." Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

In addition, dependent claims 2-3 are also in condition for allowance at least because of their dependence on independent claim 1. The additionally applied reference to Wakatshuki with regard to claims 2 and 3 does not cure the above-discussed deficiencies of Lai.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of pending claims 1-3 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, all outstanding rejections should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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